

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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CONTACT:

Mark Bayer

Nicole Encarnacao

(202) 225-2836

Markey Introduces Bill to Ensure Troops Who Sustain Wounds Do Not Also Sustain Pay Cuts

Washington, DC - Representative Edward Markey (D-MA) today introduced legislation to end the current unfair military practice of cutting the special combat pays and allowances for soldiers after they are injured in combat and then evacuated from a war zone to recuperate from their wounds. The legislation, which Rep. Markey first introduced last year, is H.R. 771, the "Crosby-Puller Combat Wounds Compensation Act" in honor of Lance Corporal James Crosby USMC, wounded in Iraq during Operation Freedom, and Lt. General Lewis "Chesty" Puller, the most decorated Marine in the history of the Corps. Lance Corporal Crosby is from Winthrop, Massachusetts in Rep. Markey's Congressional District.

"The brave men and women in our Armed Services are heroes and they deserve our full support, especially when they are injured in combat and must be evacuated for medical treatment," Rep Markey stated. "It is preposterous that we 'honor' these soldiers for their service by cutting their pay."

On March 18, 2004, Lance Corporal James Crosby was wounded by enemy fire while riding on a U.S. military vehicle in Iraq. A rocket fired at the vehicle killed the driver and injured two Marines, including James. Shrapnel from the vehicle pierced James' side and penetrated his intestines and spine. As James was evacuated from the combat zone to begin a long, difficult recovery, he suffered another hardship - an instantaneous and substantial pay cut.

The Crosby-Puller Combat Wounds Compensation Act would extend the extra combat pays for soldiers wounded in combat and evacuated from the combat zone to recuperate until the soldiers are discharged and provided veterans status or reassigned.

"After fighting courageously on the battlefield, Lance Corporal Crosby and many members of our Armed Services find that the financial support they depend on is severely reduced as they fight for their lives in a hospital. Our wounded soldiers deserve better. Instead of hitting them with a pay cut when they are injured fighting for their country, we should ensure that they are taken care of and properly honored for their service," Rep. Markey said.